

With basic target achieved, India readying for steep road ahead

Men in Blue need to make the required adjustments, as even a lone error in a knockout game can have a debilitating effect



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
LEEDS

Virat Kohli's men did what they were expected to do as a first step in the World Cup – qualify for the semifinals. Given the squad's pedigree, a last-four berth was the most basic requirement and the Men in Blue seized that with aplomb, barring a solitary loss to England.

The remaining yards, though, would be the most difficult. Every joust during the next fortnight under English skies finally reflecting summer's warmth, will be invested with a certain value. Even the last league match against Sri Lanka at Headingley here on Saturday, will have its consequences in terms of influencing the playing eleven for the semifinal and, hopefully, the summit clash at Lord's on July 14.

India has progressed, thanks to the colossal individual performances of Rohit Sharma (544 runs), Kohli (408), Mohammed Shami (14 wickets) and Jasprit Bumrah (14). Equally, the seemingly smaller contributions have played a part, be it the ones



Well done, mate! After overcoming a fighting Bangladesh, the Indians took the privilege of patting themselves on the back • AFP

from K.L. Rahul, Hardik Pandya and Rishabh Pant or even a Ravindra Jadeja, stepping in as a substitute and excelling on the field. All this paints a mosaic of winning moments in a campaign soaked in pressure and harking back to the nostalgia of 1983 and 2011 when India won the World Cup.

One game at a time

On Tuesday, after quelling a fighting Bangladesh, the Indians indulged in a rare moment of patting themselves

on the back before peering at the steep road ahead. "We did have a bit of a celebration in the dressing room. We are two steps closer to winning the trophy. But we need to take it one game at a time," Rahul said.

Going ahead, the team-management would want to plug even the faintest cracks within the unit. Picking Dinesh Karthik over Kedar Jadhav against Bangladesh was part of an exercise that aims at shoring up the middle-order which hasn't exactly

kicked on from the dream starts that the top-three pro-

Briefly on Tuesday, Bumrah left the turf at Birmingham's

niggle, India would be a bowler short. This is unlike the glory days when Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, Virender Sehwag and Yuvraj Singh could make a mark at the bowling crease. The current imbalance crept in after Vijay Shankar left with a toe fracture.

Flaw to the fore

The other worry is that once the sixth wicket falls, the rest don't survive with the exception of Bhuvneshwar Kumar. It affects the manner in

SERVO CRICKET TRIVIA

SERVO
WORLD-CLASS LUBRICANTS

Alec Stewart was born on 8-4-63 and scored 8463 Test runs.

vided. But it is a move that has its after-effects.

ham's Edgbaston and there was a fear that in case he had

Sridhar has an unenviable job on hand

Must find ideal slots for wicketkeepers masquerading as fielders

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BIRMINGHAM

India suddenly has a surfeit of wicketkeepers. And with Dinesh Karthik getting a spot during the World Cup clash against Bangladesh at Edgbaston here on Tuesday, the number of glovemen went up to four in the playing eleven! There was M.S. Dhoni the master, Karthik the comeback man, Rishabh Pant the rookie and K.L. Rahul the part-time wicketkeeper.

There is an advantage there because if your main stumper is injured or has to take a small break like Dhoni did briefly during the course of the contest, another cricketer is ready to stand behind the stumps. Pant donned the wicketkeeping paraphernalia when the former Indian captain was away.

The downswing is that a



Corrective measure: Rishabh Pant must improve his technique in throwing, says India fielding coach R. Sridhar. • AFP

wicketkeeper is usually adept in the inner-circle but may lack the skills to monitor the far corners. India's fielding coach R. Sridhar has the unenviable task of finding ideal slots for wicketkeepers masquerading as fielders. Rahul is fine both in the inner-

circle and at the deep, while Karthik was used in positions near the batsman.

Struggles in the outfield Pant, though, struggled in the outfield, and Sridhar, who met the media at the ICC's mixed zone, explained:

"A lot of work has to go into him, first of all, he needs to improve his technique in throwing and he also needs to get in to the mindset of being an outfielder. For now, we will have to use him in the appropriate position. That is why Virat (Kohli) and M.S. (Dhoni) are keen to keep him in the right place. In the previous game (against England) he saved five runs which is a bonus and he took a catch as well. So no complaints."

And as for Karthik, Sridhar said: "Dinesh is a reasonably good fielder. He pulls off some good saves at backward point. That's a big plus for us." In the days ahead, Pant and the members of his tribe are bound to get extra attention as the Men in Blue gear up for the final phase. But first there is Saturday's face-off with Sri Lanka at Headingley (Leeds) to counter.

'You'd be a fool if you get tempted to bat like Rohit'

He is from a different planet, especially when he gets going, says Rahul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BIRMINGHAM

Shifting up and down the order, K.L. Rahul has adapted rather well to his role as opener in ODIs. It is not as if the position is strange to him as the lanky batsman does take first strike in Tests and for his home State Karnataka. But in the blue shade, he had to slot himself in the middle-order as Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan forged an explosive partnership atop the batting tree.

Dhawan's thumb injury paved the way for Rahul's elevation to the top and subsequently he etched scores of 57, 30, 48, 0, 77 against Pakistan, Afghanistan, the West Indies, England and Bangladesh respectively in the current World Cup. The cricketer interacted with the media in the ICC's mixed zone at Edgbaston here on Tuesday



Praising the partner: K.L. Rahul says Rohit Sharma is in good form, but to keep putting up those performances is special. • AP

night. **Excerpts:** **The starts:** I have been batting well and I am playing the role to the best of my ability. I am a little disappointed that I can't carry on. When I speak

will get there eventually. **Missing link:** It will be great to score big runs and every batsman wants to do that. I am in a good head-space. I just want to keep doing the things I have been doing right and if I can prolong it, then obviously I will get a big score and it will benefit the team.

Rohit the Superman: You would be a fool if you get tempted to bat like him because he is in a different class. He is from a different planet, especially when he gets going. He made it look really easy (against Bangladesh) but the pitch was two-paced and the ball wasn't coming on to the bat. He is in good form but to keep putting up those performances is special. He takes the pressure off you, keeps the scoreboard ticking and it is great fun to bat with him.

Dominant England seals a semifinal spot with a big win

Bairstow's hundred helps the host go past 300; New Zealand batsmen come a cropper in face of some sustained bowling

SHAYAN ACHARYA
CHESTER-LE-STREET

Jonny Bairstow hammered his second consecutive World Cup century as England defeated New Zealand by 119 runs to storm into the semifinals of the World Cup.

At the picturesque Riverside ground on Tuesday, Bairstow's gritty knock of 106 guided England to 305 for eight.

And, chasing a rather tricky total, two crucial run-outs of Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor, cost the Kiwis, who folded up for 186 in 45 overs.

Despite the defeat, New Zealand stands close of reaching the semifinals. However, Pakistan's hopes of reaching the last-four dimmed further. It will now have to beat Bangladesh by a heavy margin.

On a surface that had very little for the bowlers, New Zealand had a messy beginning as it lost openers Martin Guptill and Henry Nicholls for just 14 runs.

Though Williamson and Taylor tried steadying the innings, a freak run out in the 15th over crashed Williamson's dreams, and also that of New Zealand's.

Mark Wood got a slight touch on Ross Taylor's drive in his follow-through, and



Blistering start: Jonny Bairstow's whirlwind of a knock ensured England put up a winning total • MICHAEL STEELE/GETTY IMAGES

Williamson, who backed up too far at the non-striker's end, had to depart. In the next over, Taylor too was run out by Adil Rashid.

Earlier, the burly Bairstow started in a whirlwind fashion, helping England reach the 100-run mark in the 15th over, the host looked poised for a mammoth total.

England stayed on course and was 194 for one at the 30th over mark. But the Kiwi bowlers found back their rhythm to check the opposition.

Bairstow and his in-form opening partner, Jason Roy, put together 123 runs. While Bairstow focused on keeping the scoreboard ticking, Roy

SCOREBOARD ENGLAND VS NEW ZEALAND

ENGLAND
Jason Roy c Santner b Neesham 60 (67b, 8x4), Jonny Bairstow b Henry 106 (99b, 15x4, 1x6), Joe Root c Latham b Boult 24 (25b, 1x4), Jos Buttler c Williamson b Boult 11 (12b, 1x4), Eoin Morgan c Santner b Henry 42 (40b, 5x4), Ben Stokes c Henry b Santner 11 (27b), Chris Woakes c Williamson b Neesham 4 (17b), Liam Plunkett (not out) 15 (12b, 1x4), Adil Rashid b Southee 16 (12b, 1x4), Jofra Archer (not out) 1 (1b); Extras (b-4, lb-4, w-7): 15; Total (for eight wkts. in 50 overs) 305.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-123 (Roy, 18.4 overs), 2-194 (Root, 30.1), 3-206 (Bairstow, 31.4), 4-214 (Buttler, 34.2), 5-248 (Stokes, 41.6), 6-259 (Woakes, 44.5), 7-272 (Morgan, 46.1), 8-301 (Rashid, 49.3).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING
Santner 10-0-65-1, Boult 10-0-56-2, Southee 9-0-70-1, Henry 10-0-54-2, de Grandhomme 1-0-11-0, Neesham 10-1-41-2.

NEW ZEALAND
Martin Guptill c Buttler b Archer

8 (16b, 1x4), Henry Nicholls lbw b Woakes 0 (1b), Kane Williamson run out 27 (40b, 3x4), Ross Taylor run out 28 (42b, 2x4), Tom Latham c Buttler b Plunkett 57 (65b, 5x4), Jimmy Neesham b Wood 19 (27b, 1x4), Colin de Grandhomme c Root b Stokes 3 (13b), Mitchell Santner lbw b Wood 12 (30b, 1x4), Tim Southee (not out) 7 (16b), Matt Henry b Wood 7 (13b), Trent Boult st. Buttler b Rashid 4 (7b, 1x4); Extras (b-2, lb-6, w-6): 14; Total (in 45 overs): 186.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-2 (Nicholls, 0.5 overs), 2-14 (Guptill, 5.2), 3-61 (Williamson, 15.1), 4-69 (Taylor, 16.4), 5-123 (Neesham, 25.1), 6-128 (de Grandhomme, 28.1), 7-164 (Latham, 38.3), 8-166 (Santner, 39.2), 9-181 (Henry, 43.4).

ENGLAND BOWLING
Woakes 8-0-44-1, Archer 7-1-17-1, Plunkett 8-0-28-1, Wood 9-0-34-3, Root 3-0-15-0, Rashid 5-0-30-1, Stokes 5-0-10-1.

Toss: England. MoM: Bairstow
England won by 119 runs.

Improbable task ahead of Pakistan

England's win against New Zealand has made Pakistan's task of qualification improbable.

FOR PAKISTAN TO QUALIFY

In its last round-robin match against Bangladesh on Friday, it must win

- by 311 runs after scoring 350
- by 316 runs after scoring 400
- by 321 runs after scoring 450

However, if Bangladesh opts to bat first, Pakistan stands eliminated even before a ball is bowled

TOP OF THE CHARTS

BATTING	M	I	R	HS	Avg	SR	100	50
Rohit (Ind)	7	7	544	140	90.66	96.96	4	1
Shakib (Ban)	7	7	542	124*	90.33	97.83	2	4
Warner (Aus)	8	8	516	166	73.71	86.57	2	3
Finch (Aus)	8	8	504	153	63.00	102.43	2	3
Root (Eng)	9	9	500	107	62.50	91.74	2	3

BOWLING	M	I	W	BB	Avg	Econ	SR	5w
Starc (Aus)	8	8	24	5/26	15.54	5.01	18.5	2
Ferguson (NZ)	7	7	17	4/37	18.58	4.96	22.4	0
Archer (Eng)	9	9	17	3/27	22.76	4.78	28.5	0
Amir (Pak)	7	7	16	5/30	20.43	4.95	24.7	1
Wood (Eng)	8	8	16	3/18	23.06	5.22	26.5	0

THE FACE-OFF

Afghanistan vs West Indies
HEADINGLEY

	Mat	AFG	WI	Tied	NR
Overall	5	3	1	0	1

World Cup : First Meeting
LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 & SELECT 1 (SD & HD), 3 P.M.

Rayudu announces retirement

The World Cup snub could have been the reason for the sudden decision



Good bye: Ambati Rayudu thanked the BCCI and all State associations that he represented. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

One of the most exciting batsmen to represent India, Ambati Rayudu, announced his retirement from all forms of cricket on Wednesday. This comes close on the heels of the snubbing by the selectors again when they preferred Mayank Agarwal to him after Vijay Shankar was ruled out of the World Cup.

The 33-year-old communicated his decision in a letter addressed to the Committee of Administrators of Hyderabad Cricket Association

(HCA). "I would like to bring to your kind notice that I have come to the decision to step away from the sport and retire from all forms and levels of the game. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the BCCI and all the State associations that I have represented which include Hyderabad, Baroda, Andhra and Vidarbha," Rayudu, who made his Ranji Trophy debut in 2002, said in the letter.

'Honour and privilege'
"I also would like to thank the two IPL franchises MI and CSK for their support. It

Rayudu file

Considered an India prospect from early in his career, Ambati Rayudu was the recipient of the inaugural Border-Gavaskar Scholarship from the NCA, which helped him train at the Australian Cricket Academy.

■ Though he has achieved considerable success in the domestic circuit, having played for Hyderabad, Andhra, Baroda and Vidarbha in the Ranji Trophy, he found his India recognition a tad too late and his international run was not extensive.

CAREER IN NUMBERS

Format	M	R	Avg.	100s	50's	HS
ODI	55	1,694	47.05	3	10	124*
T20	6	42	10.50	0	0	20
First Class	97	6,151	45.56	16	34	210

Wish you the best going forward Ambati. You're a top man @RayuduAmbati. — KOHLI

Can understand the pain and anguish Ambati Rayudu may be feeling after the World Cup snub even after performing well. I wish him lots of happiness and peace in his second innings — V.V.S. LAXMAN

Must definitely be very painful at being ignored for the World Cup but I wish him all the very best in life after retirement — SEHWAG

I would like to thank the captains I have played under, Dhoni, Rohit and especially Kohli, who always had shown great belief in me throughout my career

has been an honour and privilege to have represented our country. I would like to thank the captains I have played under, M.S. Dhoni, Rohit Sharma and especially Virat Kohli, who always had shown great belief in me

throughout my career with the Indian team," said Rayudu, who played 55 ODIs and scored 1,694 runs with three centuries and 10 fifties at 47.05. He also played six T20Is, scoring 42 runs.

"It has been a wonderful journey of playing the sport and learning from every up and down it brought up on for the last 25 years at various different levels.

"Finally, I would like to thank my family and all the wellwishers who have been with me through this wonderful journey," Rayudu concluded.

Big-serving Opelka stuns Wawrinka

Pliskova and Azarenka move into the round of 32 with straight-set wins



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Three-time Major winner Stan Wawrinka was knocked out of Wimbledon on Wednesday, falling in five sets to 6ft, 11in Reilly Opelka.

The 34-year-old, two-time quarterfinalist was beaten 7-5, 3-6, 4-6, 6-4, 8-6 by his American opponent, the tallest man in the sport and 13 years his junior. Opelka fired 23 aces and 59 winners in his win.

Opelka will be appearing in the third round at a Slam for the first time having never won a grass court match in his career prior to coming to Wimbledon.



Big scalp: Reilly Opelka, the tallest player on the men's circuit who is debuting at The Championships, outlasted Stan Wawrinka over five sets. ■ MATTHIAS HANGST/GETTY IMAGES

Also feeling the pain was Russia's Margarita Gasparyan who was forced to retire when just two points from victory against Ukraine eighth seed Elina Svitolina.

World No. 62 Gasparyan was 7-5, 5-4 ahead when she collapsed to the ground on Court Three, suffering with cramping.

Although she bravely tried to continue, the Russian, who has undergone three knee surgeries in her career, was forced to quit.

Czech third seed Karolina Pliskova, one of four players who could end Wimbledon as World No 1, reached the last 32 with a 6-0, 6-4 win over Puerto Rico's Olympic champion Monica Puig.

Sweeping win
Former World No.1 and double Australian Open winner Victoria Azarenka swept past Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic 6-2, 6-0.

Azarenka, a semifinalist at the All England Club in 2011

and 2012, will next take on former World No.1 Simona Halep.

The seventh seed's first Grand Slam meeting with a fellow Romanian ended in victory as she battled past Mihaela Buzarnescu 6-3 4-6 6-2.

Estonia's Anett Kontaveit beat local favourite Heather Watson 7-5 6-1, while Viktorija Golubic ended Yulia Putintseva's run with a 6-4, 7-6 (3) win.

IMPORTANT RESULTS

Men: Second round: 21-David Goffin (Bel) bt Jeremy Chardy (Fra) 6-2, 6-4, 6-3; Reilly Opelka (USA) bt 22-Stan Wawrinka (Sui) 7-5, 3-6, 4-6, 6-4, 8-6; 28-Benoit Paire (Fra) bt Miomir Kecmanovic (Srb) 7-6 (5), 6-4 ret.; 11-Daniil Medvedev (Rus) bt Alexei Popyrin (Aus) 6-7(6), 6-1, 6-4, 6-4; 15-Milos Raonic (Can) bt Robin Haase (Ned) 7-6(1), 7-5, 7-6(4); 23-Roberto Bautista Agut (Esp) bt Steve Darcis (Bel) 6-3, 6-2, 4-2 ret.; 21-David Goffin (Bel) bt Jeremy Chardy (Fra) 6-2, 6-4, 6-3; Thomas Fabbiano (Ita) bt Ivo Karlovic (Cro) 6-3, 6-7

(6), 6-3, 6-7(4), 6-4; 10-Karen Khachanov (Rus) bt Feliciano Lopez (Esp) 4-6, 6-4, 7-5, 6-4
Women: Second round: 8-Elina Svitolina (Ukr) bt Margarita Gasparyan (Rus) 5-7, 6-5 ret.; 31-Maria Sakkari (Gre) bt Marie Bouzkova (Cze) 6-4, 6-1; 20-Anett Kontaveit (Est) bt Heather Watson (GBR) 7-5, 6-1; 28-Hsieh Su-Wei (Tpe) bt Kirsten Flipkens (Bel) 7-6(3), 6-3; 3-Karolina Pliskova (Cze) bt Monica Puig (Pur) 6-0, 6-4; 7-Simona Halep (Rou) bt Mihaela Buzarnescu (Rou) 6-3, 4-6, 6-2; Dayana Yastremska (Ukr) bt 27-Sofia Kenin (USA) 7-5, 4-6, 6-3.

Brazil beats Argentina in Copa America

Enters final after a pulsating encounter between the regional superpowers

REUTERS
BELO HORIZONTE

Brazil advanced to the Copa America final with a 2-0 win over Argentina on Tuesday in a pulsating and, at times, bad-tempered match decided by a goal in each half from Gabriel Jesus and Roberto Firmino.

Both sides tried to impose themselves physically early on but it was Jesus who gave Brazil the lead after 19 minutes when Firmino sent in a low cross for the unmarked striker to side-foot home from close range.

The two combined again on the counterattack after 71 minutes to make it 2-0 after great work from Jesus left Firmino with the simplest of tap-ins.

Brazil which lost twice in 42 games under coach Tite, will face either Peru or Chile in Sunday's final at the Maracana stadium in Rio de Janeiro and captain Dani Alves said its goal was within reach. "There is one more step to go before we fulfil our objective," he added.



Tap-in: A flowing move started by Dani Alves ended with Gabriel Jesus, second left, making the simplest of shots to give Brazil the lead. ■ AFP

"The standard here is very high there are no easy teams. You have to work and fight for what you want and we worked for this."

Argentina has not beaten Brazil in a major competitive fixture dating back to 2005 and that run rarely looked like ending at the Mineirao stadium here.

Sergio Aguero hit the bar with a header in the first half and Lionel Messi struck the post 11 minutes into the se-

cond period but the visitor had little luck in front of goal and was never on top for any length of time.

While the tournament has been plagued by lengthy stoppages for the video assistant referee (VAR), officials preferred to let the game run, though Argentina was incensed VAR did not come into play when Arthur felled one of its players at a corner.

Messi, who has still not won a major title with Argen-

tina, was more influential than in his first few matches here but was still a pale shadow of the player who has won everything with his club side. "We had chances, the ball hit the woodwork, it flashed across the six-yard box, there were penalties that weren't given," said Messi, who like coach Lionel Scaloni complained about the refereeing.

The result: Brazil 2 (Jesus 19, Firmino 71) bt Argentina 0.

PASSING SHOTS



Bernard Tomic. ■ CLIVE BRUNSKILL/GETTY IMAGES

Tomic faces fine after losing second shortest match

Bernard Tomic shrugged off the prospect of being stripped of his 45,000-pound (\$57,000) prize money after losing the second shortest match to Jo-Wilfried Tsonga at Wimbledon on Tuesday. "I think I played as best as I could. It's just I played terrible," said the World No. 96, who was a top 20 player in 2011 but has been dubbed

"Tomic the tank engine" by a critical Australian media. AFP

Had goosebumps walking on to Centre Court: Lloyd Harris

As a 10-year-old, Lloyd Harris sat on Centre Court at Wimbledon to watch his idol Roger Federer. "I was 10 and it was the first time I had seen a pro tennis match," recalled Harris. "I thought it was amazing seeing these guys moving and the way they played. Here I am, playing him a few years later," said the World No. 86 who was making his Wimbledon debut. "I had goosebumps when I walked on," he said. AFP

Wimbledon roof debuts on Court One

The new roof on Wimbledon's Court One was used for the first time on Tuesday - but for fading light rather than for rain. A decision was made to shut the roof at 5-5 in the final set



Serena Williams and Andy Murray. ■ REUTERS

of the match between Croatian 22nd seed Donna Vekic and Alison Riske of the United States. The atmosphere around the court changed, with sound echoing much more around the arena. AFP

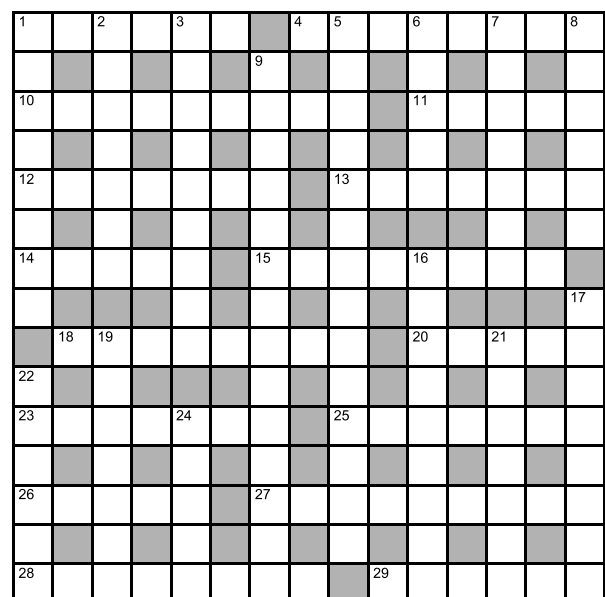
Murray-Serena form dream mixed doubles pair

Andy Murray and Serena Williams will form a mixed doubles dream team at Wimbledon, his management announced on

Tuesday, as he gradually returns to tennis following career-saving surgery. Murray, who is easing his way back into the sport following a radical hip resurfacing, will join forces with Williams in an all-star partnership when the draw is announced on Wednesday.

The two-time Wimbledon champion's partnership with seven-time winner Williams will make them instant favourites for the title. AFP

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12669



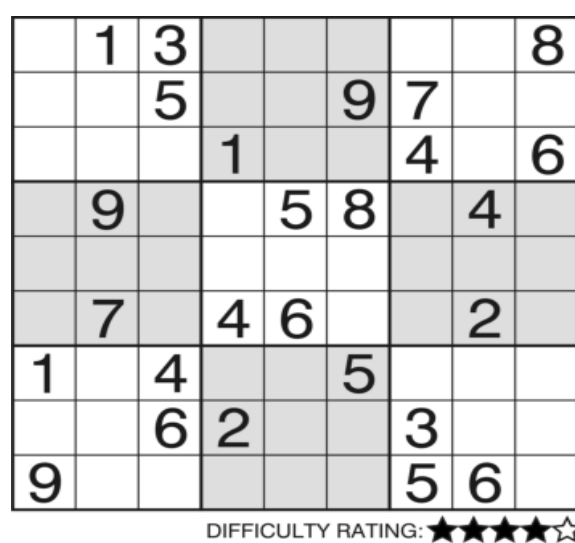
ACROSS

- 1 Drink and music - starts getting pally all around (6)
- 4 One drinks soft drink, daughter gets award (8)
- 10 Crack vital code for a sweet life in Rome (5,4)
- 11 Wastage under fine thread (5)
- 12 Plight of regular setter to break into two (7)

- 13 Discomfort like involving one in sex, say... (7)
- 14 ...and you are told it's not proper (5)
- 15 Breach chosen along border (8)
- 18 Harry managed to block capital (8)
- 20 Article is hidden inside another, Lord! (5)
- 23 Everything in Delhi gets a scrub, no work today (7)
- 25 Arab people found in the desert, mostly (7)
- 26 Can it be found in Lakshadweep and Andamans? No chance! (5)
- 27 They are fancy book binds (9)
- 28 Complaint about side protecting partner in crime (8)
- 29 Town evacuated, hold forth in bar (6)

- 3 People carry mobile phone leading to a series of events (9)
- 5 Forced march - campaign will flatter to deceive (5,9)
- 6 Not on everything, limited to internals (5)
- 7 One opposed due sharing (7)
- 8 Followed the girl finally (6)
- 9 With war a possibility, there is opportunity for one to succeed (8,6)
- 16 Among other things I learnt about India from both sides (5,4)
- 17 Tension grips the city, I will leave the bard (8)
- 19 Country secret could be ascertainable (7)
- 21 Records reach assembly within four... (7)
- 22 ... the pill bug therefore infects a media device (6)
- 24 Informed about fighting in Aden regularly (5)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12668

F	S	R	F	A	A	G	D	
A	V	A	R	I	C	E	L	A
L	L	L	S	O	A	Z	U	
L	E	A	F	L	E	A	R	N
O	M	E	V	T	T	E		
W	R	I	T	L	A	R	G	E
M	A	L	A	C	C	A	A	R
A	A	H	C	R	E	I	S	A
G	O	M	E	R	A	B	E	L
K	E	N	D	E	M	I	C	A
E	N	D	E	M	I	C	A	F
R	U	S	O	F	I	A	E	
E	X	I	S	E	D	L	E	N
L	K	E	E	E	T	Y	A	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	1	4	6	3	2	7	5	9
3	6	5	7	4	9	8	1	2
7	2	9	1	8	5	6	4	3
5	7	6	9	2	4	1	3	8
9	3	2	1	6	4	7	5	6
4	8	1	5	7	3	2	9	6
1	9	3	2	6	7	5	8	4
2	5	7	4	9	8	3	6	1
6	4	8	3	5	1	9	2	7

FAITH

Be free of bad traits

Saints like Appar were able to describe the beauty and magnificence of Lord Siva, because of their steadfast faith. Their minds were unwavering. Had they succumbed to worldly distraction and temptations, they would not have been able to sing His praises, elaborated M.A. Manickavelu, in a discourse. Appar describes Lord Siva as the One with arched eyebrows, lips red like a ripe coccinea, a smile on the lips, matted locks moistened by the Ganges, a coral red body smeared with milk white ash, and a raised foot. How can one witness this beauty unless one is born a human being, wonders the saint. It is not just enough to be free from temptation to be able to enjoy the wondrous spectacle of Siva dancing. One must also be free of bad traits, and Vallalar, in his Deiva Manimalai, lists these traits - anger, jealousy and so on. Anger is akin to barren land. An angry man keeps people away from him and none will want to be in the company of a short-tempered person.

Thiruvalluvar warns of the dangers of anger. He says if you want to protect yourself, keep your temper in check. Otherwise your anger will destroy you. A miser, who hoards his wealth has a mind that is like a dark cavern. When a man is under the influence of the quality of moha, then he becomes like a man who is in darkness. He does not see the liberating light, which is the Lord. Jealousy makes you miserable, because instead of focusing on your life, you are busy looking at another person, making comparisons, and in the process, you become unhappy. Thiruvalluvar says that where jealousy resides, it will destroy a man's wealth and lead him to hell. If a person is jealous, Lakshmi will move away, leaving her elder sister Jyestha in charge, says Thiruvalluvar. Jyestha is the Goddess of misfortune.